

From: Payton Itheme [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Sent: 7/21/2021 11:44:02 AM
To: Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH) [REDACTED]@hhs.gov]; Kyla Fullenwider [REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org]
Subject: Re: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office
Flag: Followup

Hi Eric and Kyla,

Thank you again for reaching out and providing more context to the ongoing discussions around the Surgeon General's recent announcement. We wanted to follow-up with you on a few questions you asked in the meeting focused on CrowdTangle, data on the online interventions, and Facebook's borderline content policies.

The team is very much interested in having better insight and more collaboration to understand the data used by your teams to analyze COVID-19 misinformation. For instance, we have heard several times that when the White House talks to people who are hesitant, they cite Facebook as the number one source for their information about the virus. We would like to better understand where this data comes from, so that we can work to understand this claim. We think that will better inform our collaboration going forward and ensure a shared understanding of what content is surfacing online and inform possible additional solutions going forward.

More information on CrowdTangle (CT):

- Can confirm no plans to wind down or change the ability for people to access CrowdTangle.
- A few months ago the team moved management of CrowdTangle from the Partnerships team into our Central Integrity team, so that we can develop a more comprehensive strategy for how we build on all of the different transparency efforts across the company.
- This means reconciling differing approaches across other initiatives like our quarterly Community Standards Enforcement Report, the Ads Library, the Facebook Open Research and Transparency platform and our new Transparency Center.

Interventions that the team mentioned, some of which specifically create friction in how people consume information:

- Here are some examples of interventions we have put in place during COVID-19:
 - WhatsApp forward limits cut highly forwarded messages by 70% ([link](#))
 - WhatsApp Search the Web function within forwarded chats ([link](#))
 - Facebook warning labels on fact checked content ([link](#))
 - Establishing the Alliance for Advancing Health Online ([link](#))
 - Informational labels on posts about COVID-19 vaccines and friction when someone goes to share these posts on Facebook and Instagram ([link](#))

COVID Policies:

- We remove COVID-19 content that contributes to the risk of imminent physical harm including numerous false claims about the COVID-19 vaccine. Full list of claims is in our [Help Center](#).
- We permanently ban Pages, Groups, and accounts that repeatedly break our rules on COVID misinformation.
- We also reduce the reach of Posts, Pages, Groups and accounts that share other false claims that do not violate our policies but may present misleading or sensationalized information about COVID-19 and vaccines. These policies are public and you can review them for yourself on our [COVID Help Center](#) under the header "Reducing the Distribution of Certain Other Vaccine Content and Removing Pages, Groups, and Instagram Accounts that Violate our COVID-19 and Vaccine Policies and are Dedicated to Discouraging Vaccination."

On behalf of the team,

FACEBOOK

Payton Iheme
U.S. Public Policy
[Facebook](#)

From: Payton Iheme <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Date: Friday, July 16, 2021 at 10:53 AM
To: "Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH)" <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Cc: Kyla Fullenwider <[REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org>
Subject: Re: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

Sounds good Eric and so good to be connected again Kyla..long ti me!

In advance of the meeting , I wanted to send over some materials that highlight some of the Facebook approaches to date to support COVID-19 vaccination efforts. We thought these may help provide some context for different ways the company likely can work with organizations and government in their efforts now and going forward. Of note, the FB Profile frames (HHS) and the WhatsApp bot (CDC) were launched with USG earlier this year.

[Plan to Get People Vaccinated](#)
[CDC Spanish Language Vaccine Finder on WhatsApp](#)
[Profile Frames to encourage your friends to get vaccinated](#)
[Helping Each Other Book Vaccine Appointments](#)
[Our approach to keep people informed and limit misinformation on our platforms](#)

Best,

Payton

FACEBOOK

Payton Iheme
U.S. Public Policy
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[REDACTED]

From: "Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH)" <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Date: Friday, July 16, 2021 at 10:35 AM
To: Payton Iheme <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Cc: Kyla Fullenwider <[REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org>
Subject: RE: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

Hey Payton,

Thanks so much for your note. Our plan was to talk about the advisory overall, but yes, happy to go over these requests that Jen listed more broadly.

Looking forward to connecting today.

Best,
Eric

From: Payton Iheme <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 15, 2021 6:24 PM
To: Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

Hi Eric,

Good evening and quick question for you.

We heard during the press conference today that Jen listed a focus on the following items and that we had received these requests already?

Was this part of what you were going to speak to Facebook about at the upcoming meeting? Our team not sure they are tracking a specific list of request.

1. Measure and publicly share the impact of misinformation on our platform;
2. Create a robust enforcement strategy that bridges our properties and provides transparency about the rules;
3. Take faster action against harmful posts;
4. Promote quality information sources in the feed algorithm

Feel free to call at any time. My cell phone is below.

Best,

Payton
[REDACTED]

From: "Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH)" <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>
Date: Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 9:08 AM
To: Payton Iheme <[REDACTED]@fb.com>, Nick Clegg <[REDACTED]@fb.com>, Brian Rice <[REDACTED]@fb.com>
Cc: Kyla Fullenwider <[REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org>
Subject: RE: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

You've probably seen this, but sharing here:

"Health misinformation is an urgent threat to public health. It can cause confusion, sow mistrust, and undermine public health efforts, including our ongoing work to end the COVID-19 pandemic," said U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy. "As Surgeon General, my job is to help people stay safe and healthy, and without limiting the spread of health misinformation, American lives are at risk. From the tech and social media companies who must do more to address the spread on their platforms, to all of us identifying and avoiding sharing misinformation, tackling this challenge will require an all-of-society approach, but it is critical for the long-term health of our nation."

You can learn more and access the full advisory [here](#).

From: Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH)

Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 8:50 PM

To: Payton Iheme <[REDACTED]@fb.com>; Nick Clegg <[REDACTED]@fb.com>; Brian Rice <[REDACTED]@fb.com>

Cc: Kyla Fullenwider <[REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org>

Subject: RE: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

Thanks so much, Payton.

I don't think there will be too many surprises, but eager to share the whole thing and dig in this week. On the technology side, at a high level, the Advisory notes that technology companies and social media organizations have a role to play in product and policy design to help slow the spread of health misinformation. Again, I know you have all been working hard and thinking deeply about this issue.

Looking forward to connecting Friday.

Best,
Eric

From: Payton Iheme <[REDACTED]@fb.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 5:57 PM

To: Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH) <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>; Nick Clegg <[REDACTED]@fb.com>; Brian Rice <[REDACTED]@fb.com>

Cc: Kyla Fullenwider <[REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org>

Subject: Re: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

Thank you very much Eric and looking forward to speaking to you on Friday.

I understand you are waiting for the public announcement, but do let us know if there is a social media aspect you can provide insight on.

Best,

Payton

From: "Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH)" <[REDACTED]@hhs.gov>

Date: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 at 5:21 PM

To: Nick Clegg <[REDACTED]@fb.com>; Brian Rice <[REDACTED]@fb.com>; Payton Iheme <[REDACTED]@fb.com>

Cc: Kyla Fullenwider <[REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org>

Subject: RE: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

Hi Nick, Brian, and Payton,

I hope this finds you all doing well this week. [Payton—I know we are slated to connect on Friday, but wanted to loop before then with all of you.]

I know we had hoped to connect earlier, but I did want to just give you a quick heads up (close hold) that Dr. Murthy will be releasing an Advisory tomorrow about the importance of addressing health misinformation. I can share the doc tomorrow once it's public, but it's a first step for us to call for a whole-of-society approach to addressing this important topic. I know there will be a chance for us to connect Friday and beyond about this and more, but wanted to give you all a courtesy heads up.

Looking forward to connecting.

Best,
Eric

Eric W. Waldo [He/Him]
Director of Engagement
Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

From: Waldo, Eric (HHS/OASH)
Sent: Tuesday, July 6, 2021 9:47 AM
To: [REDACTED]@fb.com; [REDACTED]@fb.com
Cc: Kyla Fullenwider <[REDACTED]@usdigitalresponse.org>
Subject: Connecting with Dr. Murthy's office

Hi Nick and Brian,

I hope this finds you well. I'm Dr. Murthy's Director of Engagement and I wanted to reach out.

As you know, one of the issues Dr. Murthy has been thinking about is how to help stop the spread of health misinformation as we continue to tackle COVID19 and beyond. I know you and your teams are working hard and thinking deeply about this issue. We'd love to chat over zoom to connect and discuss what's on the horizon for our teams.

Is there a good time this week to connect? Happy to work with whomever on your team to coordinate calendars.

Thanks so much!
Eric

Eric W. Waldo [He/Him]
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U.S. Department of Health & Human Services